



# Best Friends Veterinary Group Newsletter

SPRING 2012

## Quick Guide to Puppies & Kittens

**Our spring newsletter is all about puppies and kittens as we start to see the first of this years new pets through our doors.**

Whilst this is a wonderfully exciting time for new pet owners, we also know that it can be quite daunting, especially if you are a first time pet owner. So we hope we can help you with some of the many questions you have in our newsletter, plus please feel free to ask our knowledgeable staff for more information on these or any other pet related subjects at any time.

### Play & Discipline

Stalking and pouncing are important play behaviour and encourage muscle development. By providing toys your pet will be less likely to use family members for these activities - the best toys are interactive, stimulating and appropriately sized.

Disciplining may be necessary if behaviour threatens people or property, but harsh punishment should be avoided. Remote punishment is preferred because the pet associates punishment with the undesirable act, not with you and consists of using something that appears unconnected to the punisher. Use spray bottles, throw objects in the direction of the puppy or kitten to startle (but not hit) it, or make loud noises.

### Socialisation

Puppies are very impressionable especially between 4-12 weeks old. Good experiences in this time will stay with them throughout their life, so exposure to as many types of social events and influences as possible is advisable.

Unfortunately until your pet has completed its vaccination course they will not have built up immunity against mainly common diseases, therefore any socialisation carries risks that should be considered.

### Food

Diet is extremely important in the growing months of a pet's life and beyond. Dry food is definitely less expensive than wet, especially given that wet contains around 75% water, compared to only 10% in dried food. Wet food is often more appealing to a dog's taste, however will not be more nutritious or as good for maintaining a healthy mouth and teeth. A good quality dry food will also have less undigested particles and so less physical waste (faeces).

By feeding any pet very tasty food you run the risk of creating a very finicky appetite, they will often start to hold out for table scraps and not eat their well-balanced dog food. Whilst we enjoy a variety of things to eat in our diet, dogs prefer not to change from one food to another unless they are trained to do so by the way you feed them. Do not feel guilty if your cat or dog is happy to eat just one food day after day, week after week.

We recommend Royal Canin pet food as it is a complete food and does not need supplementing. Our staff will be happy to advise you on the most suitable food for your puppy or kitten.

### Vaccinations

Puppies and kittens should both ideally have a full course of vaccinations between 6-12 weeks, which is two

injections several weeks apart. After this they will require



a booster every 12 months for the rest of their life to keep their immunity up.

### Fleas & Worms

Ideally you should treat your pet with a preventative flea treatment every month throughout the year. The choices available are vast, many are not suitable for use on puppies and kittens, different types vary in cover (just killing fleas, stopping their lifecycle etc...) as well as their protection➔

## Special Offers

### March & April

Sign up to our Healthy Paws Plan before the end of April & get a FREE Microchip

### Puppy & Kitten Packs

Save up to 20% off your puppy or kittens initial vaccination course, flea and worming treatments.

### Recommend a Friend

Receive a £5 credit to your account when a friend registers at the same practice. Pick up a leaflet in your local surgery or visit our website  
[www.bestfriendsgroup.com](http://www.bestfriendsgroup.com)

→ against other parasites such as a lungworm. We would be happy to advise you on this to ensure you make an appropriate choice for the size and lifestyle of your puppy.

Worming should be done more frequently during the first few months and at a weight appropriate dose for their growing size. Below is a standard guide, however house cats and hunting pets may need a different approach for their adult lifestyle, ask your Vet for more details.

Puppies: every two weeks from 2-12 weeks old, then every three months

Kittens: every two weeks from 6-12 weeks old, then every three months

### Microchipping

Microchips are the best way of identifying and contacting the rightful owner of a pet should it get lost or be stolen. The microchips we use are the size of a grain of rice and are not made from glass, making them shatterproof so they will last a lifetime. They are inserted in the scruff of the neck by injection and no anaesthetic is required.

### Neutering

Once your puppy or kitten is 6 months old, you should consider getting him or her neutered for preventative health care reasons. Both operations are done under general anaesthetic and require a days stay at the vets, however they are normally allowed home that evening and are fully recovered from the operation within about two weeks.

## Surgery Numbers

Billericay	01277 651009	Peterborough, Broadway	01733 562904
Chatteris	01354 692309	Rainham	01708 555788
Chingford	0208 524 6326	Romford	01708 762266
Dagenham	0208 595 5818	South Woodham Ferrers	01245 321717
Holbech	01406 426222	Shenfield	01277 221193
Isle of Dogs	0207 536 7555	Sawtry	01487 830595
Leicester	01162 517677	Thrapston	01832 731731
March	01354 653435	Whittlesey	01733 208090
Mile End	0207 790 4599	Yaxley	01733 243000
Milton Keynes	01908 270144		
Oakham	01572 770011		
Oakhill	0208 527 0034		

[www.bestfriendsgroup.com](http://www.bestfriendsgroup.com)

A Big Thank You to Royal Canin who have helped make this newsletter possible.



### Healthy Paws Plan

You may also want to consider joining our Healthy Paws Plan, which discounts all your flea, worming and vaccination costs for the year, split into 12 easy monthly direct debit payments. We will remind you whenever treatment is due, you get two healthy checks per year one at vaccination and another six months later, 10% off all other product and services provided by us including food, as well as other special offers only available to Healthy Paws Plan members. Please ask a member of staff for more information.

Give your new pet the best start in life with a Best Friends Puppy or Kitten Pack and save money too!



**Puppy & Kitten Packs**  
**Now Available**

please ask at Reception for more details

### Our Puppy & Kitten Packs include:

- Full Vaccination Course & Microchip
- 1 Months Flea Treatment & 1 Months Worming Treatment
- Free bag of Royal Canin Puppy or Kitten Food
- Advice, Love & Cuddles

Plus join Practice Plan and we'll give you a voucher for 25% off neutering